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6 April 1957

Mr. Roger G. Seely, Chief
 Foreign Broadcast Information Service
 2130 E. Street N.W.
 Washington, 25, D.C.

Dear Roger:

Subject: [redacted]

Antenna Field

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Last week I was invited down to the offices of the U.S. Army Engineer District, R.I. (formerly called Okinawa Engineer District) for discussion of an easement or pole rights for the antenna field. Present were Col. John P. King, Chairman of the Land Acquisition Commission; Col. Hamilton W. Fish, Deputy District Engineer; Maj. Harry Apple, of the USCAR Land Division; Mr. Herman C. Medlecky, Acting Chief, Real Estate Division, Engineer District; and Mr. James B. Bevill, of the Engineer Group, Col.

The subject of the discussion was a cable from CMAC, Washington, asking for appraisal of the tracts of land on which the poles stand. The cable resulted from FBIS Headquarters approach to CMAC on the question. Along the lines of my 27 March letter (subject: Pole Rights) I explained what FBIS means by such an instrument, what restrictions would be placed on the owners, and what rights FBIS would want.

It was not made clear to me who was to answer the cable or what the answer would be. However, the following points were expressed during the discussion:

1. All other antenna fields held by U.S. organizations are to be acquired under the "Determinable Estate" instrument, which requires lump-sum payment in turn for full control until such time as the United States determines it has no further need for Okinawa land. There is no obligation to return the land to its original condition on the date of termination. (IBS was directed by its headquarters to obtain the maximum control possible.)

2. It was the consensus of those present that since tracts are small, full payment would have to be made to owners of tracts on which poles and guys are located. Some type of contract would have to be negotiated with other owners. In view of para No. 4 below it is unreasonable to expect that they would agree to much restriction if they were to receive a lesser payment.

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3. Once the contract had been written, FBIS would be unable to use the field for any other purpose.

4. I was informed that Secretary of the Army Brucker has recently issued a policy statement, which has not yet been published, that military organizations are directed to issue licenses to owners of land held by the military, the licenses to permit them to farm the land or to gather firewood therefrom without charge.

5. Although I have at various times suggested that a fair price might be the rental payment in force before the December 1955 increase, Engineer District thinking has not crystallized. I have been told that the opinions of personnel there vary from 10 to 70 percent of full payment as a fair charge for an easement.

6. More than one of the group advised FBIS to obtain full control rather than an easement, their main argument being that FBIS could possibly become a subject of Communist propaganda by refusing to pay in full while depriving Okinawans of certain rights on their land.

7. The land question is tied closely to the U.S.-supported economy of the Island. Although FBIS could conceivably pay less for its land, in the long run, at least theoretically, the U.S. Government would have to make up the difference through other channels.

I now personally believe that FBIS should abandon attempts to obtain an easement on or pole rights for the antenna field. If licenses that will permit farming are granted by other organizations, FBIS' main argument for a smaller payment will lose considerable force. Full payment may not be much greater than that wanted for an easement. If FBIS does make full payment, it cannot then be singled out for unfavorable propaganda.

An easement, however, may be what is wanted for the area west and southwest of the antenna field across which our antennas are beamed, an area not now held by the Bureau but one from which interference to reception can be expected if buildings are to be erected and if electricity is to be brought in. Although the area has not been surveyed, we estimate it to contain approximately 50 acres. FBIS would perhaps have a sounder argument for an easement on this land than on the antenna field since there would be no FBIS equipment on it, personnel would not have to enter the property, and the owners would receive payments and would still be permitted to farm without restriction. This matter will not be pursued unless you request it.

Sincerely,

[Redacted]
Chief, Okinawa Bureau

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